

## Minutes

### Michigan Freedom Trail Commission

11:00 AM – Friday, September 7, 2018  
Commission Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Michigan History Center  
702 W. Kalamazoo Street, Lansing, MI

**In attendance:** Roy Finkenbine, Rochelle Danquah, Kerry Baldwin, Edwina Murphy, Amanda Campbell, David Teeter (by phone). Staff: Sandra Clark, Tobi Voigt

**Excused:** Ron Brown, Juanita Moore, Robin Peebles, Kevin Turman

1. **Call to Order:** Finkenbine called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.
2. **Approval of the agenda:** Baldwin moved to approve the agenda as presented; Murphy seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.
3. **Introductions:** The commissioners and staff introduced themselves.
4. **Public Comments:** No public comments
5. **Approval of May 25, 2018, meeting minutes:** Nassaney moved to accept the minutes as presented; Campbell seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.
6. **Action items**
  - a. Regional collaboration:
    - i. A subcommittee made up of Finkenbine, Nassaney, Campbell, Clark and Voigt have been discussing details for the October 27, 2018 convening. Their work was provided in a planning document.
    - ii. The current plan for the event is as follows:
      1. 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. – Registration and coffee
      2. 9 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. – Opening and keynote presentations focused on the goal to create regional collaboration, featuring speakers that have done this work and can provide advice and insight. Finkenbine will serve as moderator.
      3. 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
        - a. Lunch – people will register for their choice of meal and let Voigt know if there are dietary restrictions.
        - b. Poster Sessions – There is one registration for a table to date. The commission will also have a table. Nassaney will explore the availability of exhibition panels for the commission's table. Clark mentioned that the MHC may still have 1-3 pull up banners for the commission that can be used. The commission discussed taking the opportunity of using table to get input on potential UGRR marker program. Commissioners will take shifts to man the table during the poster session and lunch.
        - c. Table topics – Campbell shared her suggestions on the table topics. The group liked the Magic 8 ball activity, where questions are written on a small ball and tossed. The person who catches it answers the first question they see. A similar

version is writing 12 questions on a piece of paper and guests can roll dice to find their question. Clark mentioned that the table topics would work best in the lunchroom, which have small tables. The ball activity will work for bigger tables.

4. 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. - Afternoon Breakout Sessions:
  - a. The group determined that the attendees will be pre-sorted into small groups as part of their registration to ensure each group has broad geographical representation.
  - b. The breakout groups will all discuss the same content: A focus on regional collaboration, but through the lens of three to four core topics (i.e heritage tourism, sharing resources, education.) The direction of the conversation will be determined by the group and the facilitator. Every group can address all topics or focus on the one that is the most important to that group.
  - c. Ten facilitators, made up of commissioners and MHC staff, will be trained. Nassaney and Campbell will develop facilitation guidelines. Facilitators will have a separate training before the event to work out details.
  - d. During discussions, facilitators will assign a recorder/reporter to take detailed notes. When the whole group reconvenes, the reporters for each group will sit on the stage. Nassaney will moderate the talk-back portion, where each reporter can share their input per topic. An MHC staff person will record the feedback on a computer during the talk-back.
  - e. The talk-back must end with a call to action to keep the momentum going. Danquah suggested we encourage individuals to join commission sub-committees. After the event, the commission will review all the input from the breakouts for discussion, synthesis, and share back with the attendees.
5. Other event logistics:
  - a. Evaluation form/sign up form for end of the event is needed.
  - b. Voigt passed out the flyer for the event. She will follow up an emailed digital version.
- b. Network to Freedom nominations: No updates.

## **7. Reports**

- a. Staff: Clark reported that a historical marker is in progress for the Mount Evergreen cemetery in Jackson. It includes content about the UGRR. Clark mentioned that the next exhibit, opening Sept. 7, is on mass incarceration. While not directly related to the UGRR, it does address issues of race, punishment, and forced institutionalism. Clark reported that the Michigan Historical Commission is doing an audit of the earliest historical markers for content, and are beginning plans to rewrite, replace, and/or supplement to tell more inclusive history.
- b. Chairperson: Finkenbine submitted his report in writing
- c. Vice Chairperson: No report
- d. Commissioner Reports: No report
- e. Standing Committee Updates
  - i. Site Identification, Facilities & Programs – No report

- ii. Cultural & Heritage Tourism – No report
- iii. Preservation & Support – No report
- iv. Education – No report

8. New Business

- a. Nominating committee: Finkenbine noted that nominations for commissioners as well as officers will be discussed at the next meeting..

9. News and Announcements – No news and announcement

10. Adjourn meeting – Campbell moved to adjourn; Campbell seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 1:32 p.m.

**Remaining 2018 Meetings: November 16**

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